

Collarlock Bar System

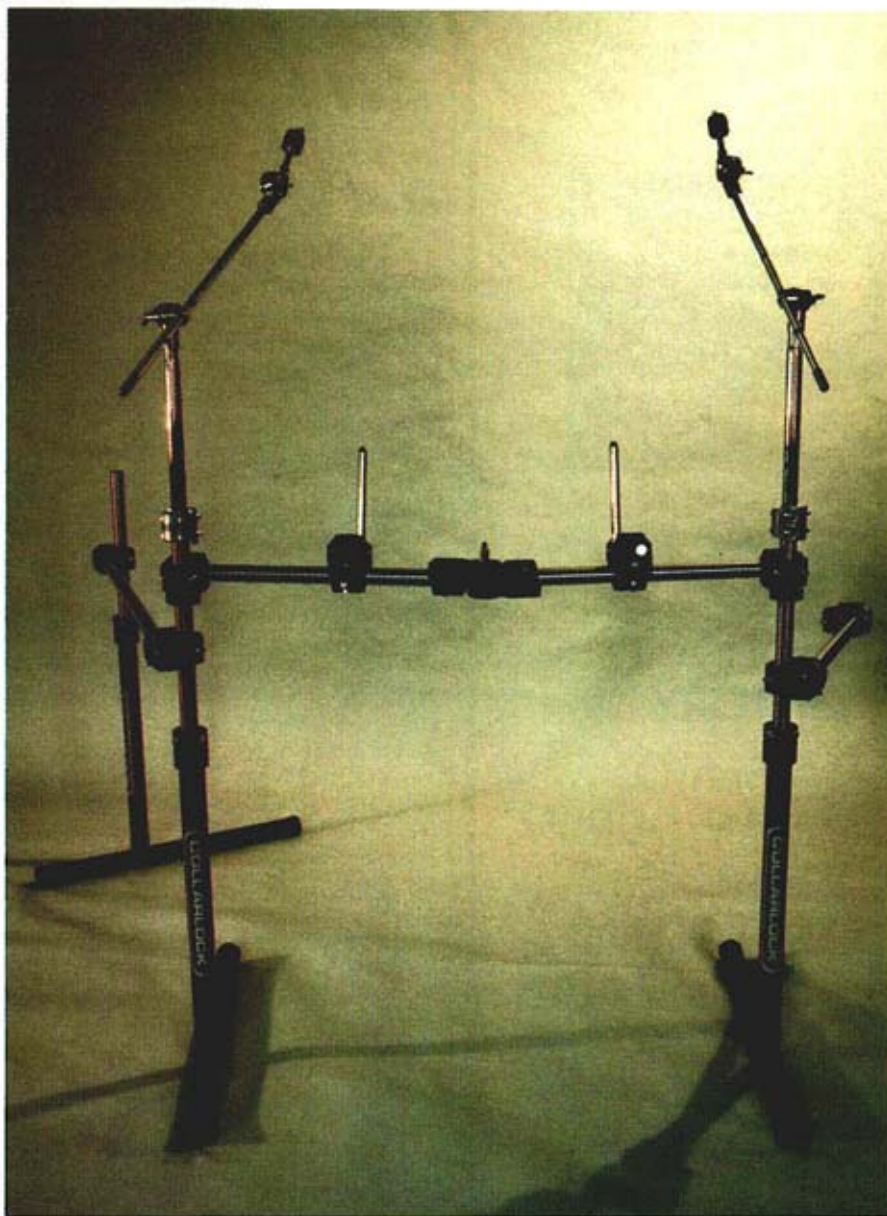


Photo by Rick Mattingly

When I first reviewed Collarlock's Bar System back in June '85, the unit was engineered for use with existing cymbal stands on your drumkit. Since then, the company has made some design changes, which warrant another look at the "new, improved" Collarlock product.

While the System can still be used with cymbal stands as supports, Collarlock now has its own support units. The supports are 1 1/2" diameter tubing, finished in black. The supports come in two types: End Supports (which are basically an off-set T shape utilizing a 24" horizontal base), and Center Supports (which are a T shape and use an 18" horizontal base). The End Supports are designed for all applications of support except between two bass drums. Center

Supports are designed to be positioned from right to left between bass drums to counter-act side-to-side motion on wider or double-bass systems. The supports dismantle into two pieces by means of a recessed key screw underneath the horizontal tube, making them compact for transport. The vertical section of each support contains an adjustable 1" diameter post within. This section is height-adjustable for the tom-tom mount cross-bar, and will disappear completely into the vertical support tube. The post is marked with graduated lines to assist in an even, balanced height setting from both supports without having to use a ruler or another form of measuring.

A nifty feature of each support is the disappearing tube that can serve as a receiving base for any hardware item with a 7/8"

down tube—such as a cymbal boom or tom arm. (Many such items are of that size.) Collarlock provides a double-sized memory collar called a *Teleclamp* for this purpose. The bottom half of the collar clamps onto the top of the disappearing tube; the top half clamps to whatever item you put in. I tried it with two generic Taiwanese import cymbal booms, and the concept worked great; the memory collar established the cymbal height, and the portion of the boom's down tube below the collar simply disappeared into the support base. This effectively did away with two cymbal stands. I could just have easily inserted two Pearl-type tom arms and used them to add small toms, electronic pads, or percussion items.

At this point, I should mention that all adjustments and settings in the Collarlock system are drumkey-operated. Well, actually, a special oversized Torque Key is supplied to assure secure pressure clamping of all components. A regular drumkey will work in a pinch, but Collarlock's special key provides just a little more leverage on the square-head screws.

A standard Bar System for a double-tom setup utilizes a 40" bar, which is made of 1" stainless steel tubing. Both ends of the bar have a black, hinged, double-holed split clamp (Collarlock calls them *Fast Clamps*) to connect the bar with the support tubes. The *Fast Clamps* have swivel nuts on one side, allowing quick removal of the bar from the support. Granite-finished aluminum memory locks are used on the support posts to set the bar height accurately every time you set up. The memory fittings interlock with the *Fast Clamps* to provide sure stability and positioning.

Fast Clamps are also used to hold the tom-tom mount arms to the bar. Collarlock has five clamp sizes, all with one side 1" in diameter (for the bar), and the other side ranging from 5/8" to 1 1/8", to hold practically any drum, cymbal, pad, or accessory you have (depending on the holder diameter). In addition, they offer seven different sizes of tom arms, from 3/8" to 1", to accommodate most manufacturers' drum brackets. The arms are chromed steel, and are formed at a 90° angle. An arm fits into a *Fast Clamp* with a 5/8" hole, and allows lateral drum angle as well as forward angle adjustments on the bar. I had no problem setting my toms as I wanted them, and they remained stable. I found it best to leave both the clamps and the arms on the bar when breaking down, as there are no memory locks provided for the tom-tom *Fast Clamps* or the arm inserts. (I guess hose clamps could be used on the bar for positioning the *Fast Clamps*, which would then allow you to take advantage of the quick-release feature.)

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From this basic setup, the Collarlock system can be expanded to whatever configuration you need by adding bars, support bases, and *Fast Clamps*. The company offers bar lengths from 12" to 72" that can be used in horizontal, vertical, or angular positions. Two bars can be connected by means of a special ratchet-angle *Bar Connector* to create horizontal angles, or to mount three or more toms in front of you in a slight V-shape. Even a hi-hat stand can be connected to the Collarlock system via a special mount that uses a 24" bar, a bar-to-bar *Fast Clamp*, and a *Fast Clamp* for the hi-hat height tube diameter. (Since the connector surfaces are round, any outward or inward angle can be achieved.) Microphones can also be added to the setup, since the company has 15" and 18" mic' holders available. With all these options, it's still possible to employ the original Collarlock idea of using your own cymbal stands as the means of support, rather than Collarlock's End Supports.

The initial setting up of the system takes a little while, but past that, future setup and teardown is simple and quick. With everything mounted up, the unit is very stable and gives a sleek, clean look (unlike some others I've seen that look like a plumber's nightmare). I can't fault the Collarlock system, except for perhaps the fact that if you change brands of drums (and thus tom holder brackets), different-sized tom arms and *Fast Clamps* might be needed. This is a fairly minor problem, however, since one size of *Fast Clamp* (FC-78, 7/8") will accommodate Pearl and Yamaha tom arms while one other (FC-10, 1") will handle DW, Gretsch, Ludwig, Rogers, Tama *Granstar*, Tempus, and probably a few others. Thus, using one or the other of these sizes of *Fast Clamps*, it may be possible to use a manufacturer's original-equipment tom arms, rather than Collarlock's specially adapted ones. In essence, you have a choice, which could prove beneficial in terms of economics.

The basic CBS-21 bar system for mounting toms, using two End Supports and one crossbar, is priced at \$529.00 (\$233.00 if you use your existing cymbal stands). Collarlock has thought out four different system "packages," as well as The CUBE (Collarlock Ultimate Bar Expansion), a cage-type arrangement for mega setups with cymbals suspended above, gongs in back, or whatever. (It lists for \$2,463.00.) By piecing together various Collarlock components, you can easily come up with an efficient custom bar-mount system that is sturdy, lightweight, easily transported, and quick to assemble and break down. You can contact Collarlock at 283 E. 11th Ave. #101, Vancouver, BC V5T 2C4, Canada.

—Bob Saydlowski, Jr.



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